

## METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR DATA DRIVEN NETWORK MANAGEMENT

### Abstract of the Invention

5           A method and apparatus for communicating functional characteristics of nodes in a communications network to the network manager in the network is presented. This is accomplished by defining a bit field that indicates whether or not a particular functions or services are supported by a particular node. The bit field for each node within the communications network is communicated to the network manager which stores the bit  
10       fields for each node within a database. The database is then utilized to perform network management functions, as it informs the network manager whether a particular service/feature is available on the node to which the bit field corresponds.